



Video Transcription
Commissioner of Education Chris Nicastro
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Hi, I'm Chris Nicastro, Commissioner of Education for the State of Missouri. Thanks for tuning in to this month's Top 10 by 20 Update.

I would like to thank everyone who attended this year's School Administrators Conference which took place last month in Columbia. The conference was a great opportunity for administrators from around the state to collaborate and share ideas with one another. If you missed the conference, check out our website to see videos and presentations. Make sure and mark your calendars for next year's conference, which will take place July 26-28.

During the conference, we were pleased to announce the winners of the Missouri School Breakfast Challenge. The Department teamed up with the Midwest Dairy Council to honor 15 school districts for their 20% or more increase in breakfast participation. Studies show breakfast is a key component to a successful school day. Moving forward, we hope all schools will make an effort to ensure students are starting off their day with a healthy breakfast.

As many of you know, the Normandy School District recently completed its transition into the Normandy Schools Collaborative. Improvements to curriculum, professional development and educator evaluation are ongoing. These improvements include work with the National Math and Science Initiative to improve educator effectiveness and student performance in these critical subject areas.

The Department is continually updating the student transfer guidance document and information on the Normandy Schools Collaborative. Those with questions regarding the Normandy Schools Collaborative are asked to visit dese.mo.gov/Normandy, or call 1-855-879-3025.

Later this month, the Department will release the 2013-14 Annual Performance Reports, or APRs. The APRs show how well each public school and school district is meeting the state's performance standards. MAP test scores, and other college and career-ready measures, are used to develop each school district's APR.

These reports are used to review and accredit Missouri's school districts, and to determine appropriate supports and interventions needed at the school and district level. The primary goal of the Missouri School Improvement Program is to prepare students for success in postsecondary education and a career. Please visit the website listed on the screen for more information.

You may know that the Department - along with partners in K-12 and higher education - has developed new standards for the preparation of educators in all certification areas. The standards include higher grade-point averages and specific requirements for improving field and clinical experiences.

This includes using the Missouri Educator Gateway Assessment, or MEGA. MEGA is a comprehensive approach for assessing educator preparation. It uses tests for admission into undergraduate education programs, and measures a candidate's work style as it relates to education. Higher standards for educators are vital when it comes to providing our children with the best possible education.

I wish everyone the best as you embark on this new school year. Thank you for everything you do to help Missouri's kids reach the Top 10 by 20.